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April 4, 1991

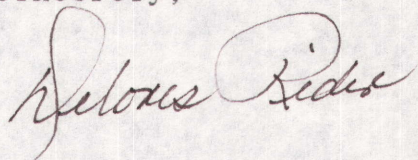
Utah State Mining Division  
355 W. North Temple  
3 Triad Center, Suite 350  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1230

Dear Sir:

It has come to my attention that the tim solution that Kennecott Copper Corporation sprays on leach dumps, which leaves huge fields of toxic waste, originates with the company that collects my garbage. As our community is pushing for more recycling, tin being one of the proposed items, it is important to me to know the mining industry's opinion on what is happening to the environment of the Kennecott Copper Mine. I would also like to know what steps the mining industry has taken or is planning to take to rectify the situation.

Thank you for taking the time to give me your organization's opinion on this situation.

Sincerely,



Delores Rider  
86 Renault Ave.  
Medford, Oregon 97501

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DIVISION OF  
OIL GAS & MINING

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## 'Recycled' Tin Cans End Up as Toxic Waste

From Staff and Wire Service Reports

Local environmentalists are angry over revelations that the tons of tin cans recycled each week by conscientious San Francisco and San Jose residents are ending up as hazardous waste in the world's largest open-pit mine in Utah.

The cans, collected in the cities' curbside recycling programs, are sold to a San Joaquin company, then dissolved in sulfuric acid and used in copper mine leaching, which leaves huge fields of toxic waste that cannot be reclaimed.

Well-intentioned curbside recycling meets the official goal of the program — keeping cans out of local dumps — but until now, neither city officials nor environmentalists had verified the final destination of the cans after they left the Bay Area.

Local recycling advocates and environmentalists were shocked to learn that the cans end up as toxic waste in a 10-square-mile open scar in Utah.

"That's bogus recycling," said David Roe of the Environmental Defense Fund.

San Francisco's recycling officials could not be reached yesterday. San Jose's director of environmental management, Michelle Yesney, said she was not sure the city could do much about the problem for the time being.

"We will investigate alternatives, but it's important to us that we keep the cans out of our landfill," Yesney said.

Tin cans, which are sorted from aluminum cans and papers

and bottles, are sold for about \$45 a ton to Houston-based Proler International Corp., which shreds the cans at its Lathrop facility in the San Joaquin Valley.

The shredded cans are sold to Kennecott Copper Corp.'s Bingham Canyon Mine 20 miles southeast of Salt Lake City. Kennecott melts the metal, dissolves it and sprays it onto "leach dumps," or piles of mined rock with a low copper content.

Once the copper is extracted, the piles are abandoned, and the metal that crusts them cannot be reclaimed. The Environmental Protection Agency says the leaching process of Bingham Canyon creates hazardous waste, the San Jose Mercury reported in weekend editions.

Recycling, considered to be the solution to scarce and overflowing landfills, has been informally mandated by the state Legislature in a law requiring cities to cut landfill trash in half by the year 2000.

However, "no one is really responsible for tracking it down the line," said David Weightman, a metals specialist for the state Waste Management Board. "There are a lot of things we have to learn about the system."

Items for San Francisco's curbside recycling, which began in 1989, are collected by Norcal, the parent company of Sunset Scavenger and Golden Gate Disposal, the city's two garbage collection companies. Norcal is the fourth-largest waste-management company in the country.